

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5862

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 5826

USIA WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

USLOSACLANT

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 0690

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAG: PFOR, MARR

SUBJ: PRESS STORIES ON SACLANT CONTINGENC PLANS FOR SOUTH
ATLANTIC NAVAL FORCE ACTION

REF: A) USNATO 0689 (DTG 091826Z FEB 76) B) STATE 15633
(DTG 190031Z FEB 76)

1. ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED IN BRITISH, GERMAN AND NETHERLANDS
PRESS ALONG LINES OF FINANCIAL TIMES FEBRUARY 5 STORY BY MALCOLM
RUTHERFORD.

(REF A)

2. ARTICLES STEM FROM NATO INTERNATIONAL STAFF MILITARY AND
POLITICAL BRIEFINGS ON FEBRUARY 3 AND 4 FOR THREE JOURNALISTS
(RUTHERFORD AND JOURNALISTS FOR THE GERMAN FRANKFURTER ALGEMEINE
ZEITUNG AND DUTCH HET PAROOL), WHO HAD REQUESTED THESE BRIEFINGS
DURING THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL MEETINGS.
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3. THE BASIC INFORMATION IN THE ARTICLES WAS DIVULGED TO THE
THREE JOURNALISTS BY BRIEFERS AT ONE OF THE SESSIONS.
THEREFORE, THE NATO PRESS SPOKSEMAN, WHO HAD BEEN RECEIVING QUERIES
FROM WIRE SERVICES AND OTHER JOURNALISTS, WAS AUTHORIZED TO

STATE AND ON FEB 5 AND 6 STATED IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC
QUESTIONS THAT:

(1) A NATO BRIEFER HAD ACCURATELY PRESENTED THE FACTS ABOUT
SACLANT CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR WARTIME-ONLY FLEET ACTION SOUTH
OF THE TROPIC OF CANCER TO KEEP SEA LANES OPEN; (2) SACLANT
PLANS HAD BEEN DRAWN UP IN 1972 FOR WARTIME CONTINGENCY USE
AND HAD NO RELATION WHATSOEVER TO THE PRESENT SITUATION IN
ANGOLA; AND (3) THERE HAD BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO NATO CONTACT
WHATSOEVER WITH SOUTH AFRICA ON THIS OR ANY OTHER SUBJECT,
MILITARY OR POLITICAL, AT ANY LEVEL AT ANY TIME.

4. THE NATO PRESS OFFICE HAS RECEIVED
NO FURTHER QUERIES ON THE SACLANT STORY, SINCE MORNING OF
FEBRUARY 6.

5. FYI MISSION UNDERSTANDS THAT: (1) SACLANT HAS NOT YET
FULLY DEVELOPED CONTINGENCY PLANS RELATED TO PROTECTION OF
SHIPPING OUTSIDE NATO AREA; (2) PLANS REMAIN AT SACLANT AND
HAVE NOT BEEN TRANSMITTED OFFICIALLY TO NATO; AND (3) THERE
HAS BEEN SOME INFORMAL COORDINATION BETWEEN SACLANT AND NATO
INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STAFF.
END FYI

6. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE SUPPLEMENTARY TO REFTEL B
WHICH THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PROVIDE FOR USE IN RESPONSE
TO QUERIES WE MIGHT RECEIVE FROM THE PRESS ON REPORTED
SACLANT PLANS FOR ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC. STREATOR

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